



Poems

J. J. PEARSON



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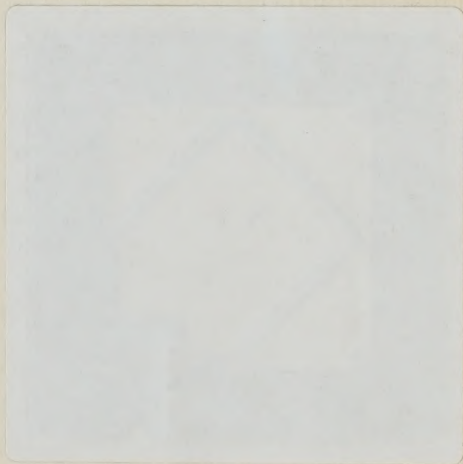
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P O E M S

POEMS

By

J. J. PEARSON

"And then againe abroad
On the long voyage whereto she is bent:
Well may she speede and fairely finish her intent."
—*Spenser*

TORONTO:
WILLIAM BRIGGS

1913

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W. J. PEARSON

ADDRESS TO SPENSER.

SPENSER! voluptuous was thy flow of words:
No rival hast thou. Shakespeare hath taught
Uniqueness of expression; but as birds
Of dazzling colours, many-winged, were shot
Thy rockets in the air:—On high they soared,
And lit as magic instruments of light
Upon a chosen place. The whole appeared
Unrivalled art; and yet the mind of man,
Dim, sordid, turns from thee to common phrase,
Accustomed earth, not things divine, to scan;
Yet thy rich lyre is but a starry maze,
Mirror of the eternal:—We will turn
In reverence to God thy beauty to discern.

1913.

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POEMS

ON KEATS.

ENDYMION, Hyperion, St. Agnes' Eve!
These well alone could serve a crown to weave,
A garland to adorn
Him who so young hath passed away. The morn
Of life had barely dawned; his feeble breast
Could not endure the viper stings that prest
Into his heart; yet fair,
Fair, was he to behold; as fair his thought.
Yea; angel sweet his speech, as gilded gold
Refined by the Refiner of all souls.—
He passed; for truth had sought
In long and weary search the fairest flower
Of earth; and when at last
She found it couched beneath a Roman bower,
She did not rest, but snatched: the lily fair
Was lifted root and all,
And yet by one whose love doth mark the spar-
row's fall.

WRITTEN AFTER READING SHELLEY'S
"THE REVOLT OF ISLAM."

A WHEELING chariot, and a rolling cloud;
Thick curling smoke ascending in the air;
The hissing waters, thunder pealing loud:
Then stilling all a form of maiden fair;
A harmless serpent twined, a glittering crown;
A cave of horrors, an aëreal dome;
A babbling throng, a nation trodden down;
Then 'last the spectre boat returning home:—
I swooned, and then retraced my weary way:
No mere invention this—this rolling lay
Comes from the breast of one who truly burns,
And with a passion strong the truth of life discerns.

TO SHELLEY.

After reading Joseph Skipsey's short critical
biography of the above.

OFT have I seen the sun at even setting
Mask its bright hues behind a dullsome cloud;
A man the purpose of his life forgetting
Amid the clamour of the lowly crowd.
Proud was my heart when yester eve I turned
To Skipsey's record of thy tuneful lyre:
No fading there, but ever brighter burned
Thy lamp of life as strength did fain expire;
Youth lit thy candle; years poured on it oil,
And these thy soul fanned to a glowing flame
Worthy of England's vast implanted soil:
A crimson arch arose that at thy name
Gave all its spectrum colours to the earth:—
Brightened thy star at death, for 'twas immortal
 birth.

“NULLA DIES SINE LINEA.”

AWAKE once more! the sunlight falling tender
Upon my cot is seen:—upon my bier
I laid me down to rest, nor did I fear
A true account unto my God to render.

Each night I lay me down, and think the last,
Last day is spent on earth; yet I forget
The sun doth elsewhere rise when here 'tis set—
I wake in wonder when the night is past—

I wake in wonder; then behold the light,
And thank my God for one day more to live,
One precious moment, and to it I give,
In one pursuit, my being and my might.

THOUGHT ON CALVARY.

“He is passed from death unto life.”—St. John
5: 24.

WHEN died the Saviour Christ a wailing rose
From rocks and caverns deep, and far among
The ruined city's walls the dead uprose;
And every tree and hill had found a tongue
To utter their lament; and all along
The sea of lapping waters were there heard
The notes of grief:—around the earth there
rung

The dirge of the old world, as fell the Word
Of peace and life and hope, the Kingdom of the
Lord.

Then when He rose the merry waves stood
still;
And all the trees were breathless; then there
fell
Angelic music, coming from the hill,
As the soft warbling in a shady dell

Of some fond mother bird whose heart doth
 swell
With joy unspeakable; her infant love
Again has come to life—the funeral knell
Is sweet as is the murmur of the dove
When in our ears its tones breathe sweetness
 from above.

TO OENONE.

MERRY birds and silvery bells,
Sunny days and flowery dells,
Throbbing music, rapture swells
 Deep within my breast.
Yet when all these joys are sped,
To thee is my spirit led;
Life thou givest to the dead,
 Fairest one, Oenone!

Still; and distant from thee now,
In the dark of night laid low,
Fair thy form above doth glow,
 Dearest one of all:

Roses on my cot are piled
By thy hand: though unbeguiled
Thou in fair attire smiled
O'er me when I dreamed.

Young and sprightly was thy form;
Nimble as the tender fawn
Tripping o'er the dewy lawn
Dearest one, Oenone!
One hath shielded thee from harm,
Not alone for earthly charm,
But thy spirit ever warm
Saved a soul, Oenone!

When the rock was hard and cold,
Pricking, freezing thou hast sold
Thy dear self a palm to hold,
Giving for the rash, the bold,
Thy fair soul the dearest:
This to thee I fondly give,
Turn, Oenone, turn and live
For a soul more worthy!

GOD IS LOVE.

FROM out the bosom of eternity
Shot as a spark from a volcanic fire,
I lit alone upon the rolling sea
Of time, but ever homeward did aspire;
Nor claimed I earth nor any earthly sire:
But o'er my head there hovered a white dove:—
As I ascended seemed it to rise higher,
But last, when mounted high the earth above,
It spoke within my ear the message, "God is
Love."

Yea, God is Love; His throne I did behold
Far set in grandeur 'mid the myriad stars;
Glittering it shone above as brightest gold,
Yet only to the pure the King appears,—
For all below the earthly semblance wears—
Fanning aside the elements of space
With lofty grandeur to the earth He peers:
Serene His majesty, I seem to trace
His image over all in this our earthly place.

EVENING THOUGHT.

AT eve the air is silent o'er the mead;
The lark doth hover blithely; let me lead
As it a life of joy; as great my need
Thus heavenward to soar.

Long has my soul when weary, worn with care,
Sighed for its home, the same fond bliss to share;
To soar aloft celestial robes to wear
Eternally.

THOUGHT ON THE CLOSE OF LIFE.

TOLLING of silvery bells, low wailing sounds afar;
Steps to the heavenly throne, portals ajar;
One last clear call, one bright and glistening star
To lead me home.

A FRAGMENT.

LOVE'S likeness in a kindred soul may shine
Soft as the dew, bright as the rose; yet thou,
Fair loved one, such beware and shun in time,
Lest in thy breast the rose a thistle grow,
And thou at last behold too late with shame
That thou wast loved for likeness to a name.

THOUGHT ON DEATH.

BRINK of the grave, foretell
How one can pass thee well!—
Over thee go to dwell
Souls to a doom:
Yet not the souls do go,
But bodies are laid low,
Singly and row by row,
In the churchyard.

Yet lowly followers
Visit the sepulchres;
Hence one in truth infers
Something is there:

'Tis but the passing form,
Body of make and charm;
Yea, 'tis the soul's right arm
Set here in time.

Set in eternity
Well every soul may be,
Streams pouring to the sea
Sprung from a fount:
Hence what the pilgrim needs
Is to do loving deeds;
And my poor spirit bleeds
Thus to achieve:
Yea, thus to be and do
That when the race is through
I may in amber hue
Pour forth my life.

STANZAS.

Written on looking at the painting, "The Burning of Shelley's Body," by Fournier, in the Art Gallery, Liverpool: Byron attending the cremation; Keats (Adonais) had previously been mourned by Shelley.

METHOUGHT I had a dream; the cruel past
Before my vision came, but lo! awake,
My soul alone had dreamt, and I recast
The thoughts which stirred the artist thus to
take
His brush and canvas to again reshape
The saddened scenes of that dull July day,
When on the rifted sands of the fair lake
The flaming bier consumed the mortal clay
Of him who sad had sung the Adonais lay.

There, standing by the funeral pyre, his eye
Deep peering to the future, saddened, lone,
The prince of song, whose strains, majestic,
high,
Had made the wandering pilgrim all his own;
Last seen as prince of nature on his throne
Was one by this of his dear friend bereft.—
Three names for us the trump of life had
blown;
One perished, Adonais, and two left,
One sang his dirge; but gone, lone Byron now is
left.

A WISH.

GIVE but one moment of eternity: one spark of
life
Eternal thrown within this smouldering heap
So pent with strife;
And I would then discern with purer eye
The pulse that thus sent forth in love and peace
Can teach to die.

ANOTHER ON THE DEATH OF SHELLEY.

BLUE circled was the sky, a spectrum gay
The eve when fair Prometheus passed; but
gone,
His soul forever near did seem to stay,
And in a form so fair to look upon
As though a mirage o'er the waters shone,
Image eternal of the man whose fame
Was heralded afar; but lo, the sun
Is clouded deep; we shudder at the name
Of him who in our breasts aroused a heavenly
flame.

“DE IMITATIONE CHRISTI.”

A KING, a queen, a prophet, and a prince
Are needed in each state; each duty has:
The king to rule; the prince to war; the queen
To wed each interest into one; to give
A loving touch to all: the prophet stands
Superior to all time; his message holds
For every age and clime, and he beholds

As with the eye of God.

Now in the past it chanced there came to be
A citizen, by birth a Nazarene,
Who was a prince and king by God decreed;
A queen in fellowship of love; he stood
And spoke as very God, a prophet true
He was; and we may learn like him to do,
His followers to be;

Then in the land will reign true liberty
When we have learned true Christians to be.

ON VISITING BURNS' HOME.

A BARD for every country! his life blood
Must write, write deeply, other ink will fade:—
One visitant of nature, and he stood
Beside his native stream, beneath the shade
Of the o'erspreading birch;—For so it came
Old Scotland had her heroes, but their fame
Remained inscribed in stone, as dull to view
As tuneless to the ear; the Scottish lyre
Was dim as at the morn the fading moon.
Last one arose, tuned as a thrush to sing,
Mellow in flow, majestic; he partook
Of the perfumèd airs, the fields, the flowers,
The silvery spray, the crimson dawn, and wove
Them into one vast rainbow, and it spread
From the mild Solway to the northern peak
O'er all the land so fair:—the nation spoke
And echoed as a mellow string; the bow
Was this fair minstrel bard of ancient Ayr,
Scotland's uncrownèd king; and yet he trod
The bitter way of life unclothed, unfed
A pilgrim of the heavenly that sent
Found not his kin to his fair thinking bent;
But when he passed they looked from him to
God,
And deemed him scarcely then a creature of the
sod.

WITH APOLOGIES TO WHOM IT MAY
CONCERN.

OF old did Spenser sing the song of seasons,
In strophes twelve, as various his reasons;
And Pope sang autumn, winter, summer, spring,
Or Daphne let it be: Time on her wing
Bore Thomson o'er the seasons, and we heard
His strains as mellow as the singing bird;
And these would tempt me forth, though I may
rue it,

To sing an autumn strain: I guess I'll do it;
And sooth my melody shall be a summing
Of what is past, for of the joys as coming,
These lie beyond the great ethereal blue;
'Tis from the past the bards of old forth drew
Their inspiration, and I follow suit,
For in the past the future must take root;
E'en Keats refused to sing as Spenser bold;
The flower must drink the strength of soil to hold
Communion ere it ever shall bring forth
A flower beautiful of any worth:
Well! Various themes and stories might be
sung:—

This suits me best:—An aged crow was hung,

Caught in a tree, and 'round from near and far
 The rookeries were waging impish war.
 All round about they cawed and croaked and
 sang,
 But still firm held the ancient crow did hang,
 Till from the north the storm and wind came
 strong,
 And swept them to the grave, a hopeless throng.

I thought of life, and all its various phases,
 Of war and conquest, and the many graces,
 So called because they charmed in days of eld;
 But looking to the future I beheld
 New forces 'rising in each land and state,
 Flourishing, aspiring, noble, great,
 Linked to the universe that is, not that
 Mad state of things that was: let us forget
 The bloody past; within the western sphere
 Do greater things than those that are appear:
 Yea, let us build with an ambition true
 The good, the lofty; fashion things anew;
 Give shape and destiny to things that are,
 And for a glorious goal the earth prepare;
 Yea, leave the dead to fall or swing at will;
 Ideals are for life, and not to kill;
 The East, bald Rome, an aged crow may be;
 We draw all truth from one eternity.

LINES.

Look at the past with me, my child,
My faery sprighted lover,
When the dull lake's o'erbrimming marge
Became a shining river!
Those days are gone,
And with the sun
Seem sped and gone forever.

Come home with me at eve, my child
Of fairest memory!
Our schooner o'er the ocean calm
Is drifting peacefully;
And thou and I
Return to die
For God's eternity.

“NUNC SCIO QUID AMOR SIT.”

WHEN the last hope of love my soul had failed,
Like a star sunken in a briny ocean,
Nor one bright thought to cheer my soul
 availed,
But downwards with a dark eternal motion
My mind went reeling, steeped in mad commo-
 tion,
I drank the last drop from the cup of grief,
And poison was my only earthly portion;
My veins upheaved, my heart was throbbing
 brief,
And lo! I sank and passed, a ship dashed on a
 reef.

I rose again, the sun stood high at noon;
The lark sang in the meadow, and a rill
Shot upward from a mountain side; a loon
Called from a distant marsh, and from a hill
A gleam arose, and in my soul a will
To greater deeds was rising: I aspired
To climb a lofty peak, and onward still
The voice of love arose, and then retired:
But on the peak, my soul its beauty then admired.

FRAGMENT, 1912.

FAR flung o'er mountain and o'er moor
The wailing echoes swell and die,
And lo! unhinged an open door
Is seen set in an azure sky;
And on the amber serried clouds
Aloft an angel boldly stands;
Her form is wrapt in magic shrouds,
And high she holds her bleeding hands.

ERINENSIS.

I.

WHEN Erin rose above the rolling waves
That surge around her rock-girt shores, the sun
Had risen red above the cloudy maze,
And nature had her conquest well begun;
Then to that isle, so fair to look upon,
Came forth a people, valiant, noble, true;
Virtue, in gloom, her course had well-nigh run;
And dimly all did fade, when as anew
This island race was set an emerald in the blue.

II.

The sylvan slopes that dip towards the sea
Were decked with lofty cedars deeply hung
With myrtle and with ivy—I did stray
From hill to hill; from rock to rock among
The vine-clad peaks: as yet the land was
young;

Then to the sea with longing gaze I stared,

When lo! before upon the sand a young,
A darling child:—it saw me as I neared;—
So fair, as angel form, the darling child appeared.

III.

I gazed upon the scene; when lo! a sound
Of rustling wings and screaming; then the sky
Was darkened as, swift wheeling round and
round,
A blood-red eagle came; its piercing eye
Beheld the child, and down it swooped; its cry
Rent all the air the planets far among;
The sun dipped low and trembled, and a sigh
Came wailing from the hidden moon; a throng
Of Seraphs, clasping hands, arched o'er the infant hung.

IV.

And one descended low, and with a pen
Of gold upon a gilded scroll awrote
The name of that fair infant, "Purity": then
Ascended to the heavens high, it smote
Upon the heavenly harp; a quivering note
Resounded to the farthest seas; the sun
Returned unto its place: the lightnings broke

O'er all the confused earth : the strife begun
Must now be waged in blood ere this fair child is
won.

V.

But now the eagle rose, and soaring high,
Bore far upon the waters this fair child,
Clutched in its mighty claws : and coming nigh
Unto a mountain peak, huge rocks up-piled ;
And perching there, a sacred city smiled,
And beckoned to the eagle, for afar
It saw the infant form, pure, unbeguiled,
And sought to wreak on it eternal war,
That bird and city might an equal bounty share.

VI.

But ere the eagle left her lofty height,
Pillared in smoke, a cloud came down : a flame
Of fire flashed, and, startled at the sight,
The eagle dropped her prey : the Seraph came,
And bore the child to where a lofty fane,
Erected on a glassy peak, strong stood
Against the winds of east and west : again
In peace, in power of the highest Good,
The infant looked afar o'er the eternal flood.

VII.

Then spoke the Seraph to the child: " Whence
now

Thy origin? thy course?—Thy destiny
Is written on the roll of life; the flow
Of the eternal stream of thought in thee
Shall find its home, and heavenly liberty
Shall from these furrowed wounds as freely
flow

As floweth now the blood: the Crimson Sea
Is coloured with thy life; the ruddy glow
Has risen to the heav'ns, though thou art sunken
low.

VIII.

" Thy destiny is writ: I pray thee go,
Go where the eagle bears thee; hither borne
The faith that floweth in thy blood shall be
For healing; though thy flesh be rent and torn,
This faith in ancient days hath overborne
The might of arms, the heraldry of kings;
E'en now the Prince is standing at the doorn
Of earth: the power that beareth thee on wings
Shall sink to rise no more when last thy light
upsprings."

IX.

Back to the rocky height the Seraph came,
And laid the wounded infant there to rest;
Left it; the eagle swooped, and came again,
And drove its talons in the tender breast,
Piercing e'en to the heart; and then uprist,
Fanning the saddened air, and o'er the sea
Coursed on its way; mine eyes in vision
 pressed

For centuries, and I followed; misery
Was in that course, but, too, were germs of
 liberty.

X.

I stood upon the peak and gazed afar
O'er land and sea, where 'neath the streaming
 sun
Men toiled in anguish: goaded fierce to war
They struggled for a life; and labour done
Left still the gloom: a hopeless race was run;
And on the sea the sailor still did trend
The hopeless tracks of furrowed foam:—upon
The sea and land is labour without end
Till man in spirit doth the things of earth trans-
 cend.

XI.

But ere the crimson speck, the fluttering wings,
Had passed beyond the ocean to the place
By destiny so given, formed things
Arose and fluttered:—peering I could trace
The form of one supreme o'er all in space,
The angel "Peace": she spoke, and all stood
still;
Then by so much of power and of grace
She bound me charmed beneath her magic will;
And thus she spoke to me from out her holy hill.

XII.

"The seed within the soil must fade and die
Ere well the kernel is unloosed that bound
Is in its narrow cell; it e'en must sigh;—
Not all is pleasure e'en in fairest ground;
So much of earth is chaos,—life is found
When this rude outer vesture yields; the day
That God spoke to the darkness was unwound
The last, last husk that held the germ; in glee
The little atom burst to life and liberty.

XIII.

"Then burst the bands of chaos, and began
The struggle for existence: merrily

The germ quick yielded to the light which came
To guide its way into the timeless sea;
And though did chaos chafe all angrily,
Dashed by the spray, bounding from rock to
 rock,
Life in one cell went forth till verily
The storm around its breast it learned to mock,
And last it stood supreme above all earthly shock.

XIV.

“ From cell to cell dividing, on it teemed
In contest virile; then from form to form
Till last the atoms waking idly dreamed;
Then in their breasts was passion rudely born;
Life rising slowly through the mass forlorn
Stood hopeless: then the breath of God forth
 came
In jutting fiery jet in tonguèd form
Into the heart of life; its piercing flame
Gave thoughtless atoms thought: the human was
 its name.

XV.

“ Thought buried deep, insatiate, wonderful,
Aspiring back to God from whence it came,

Began to move the universe, till full,
Full many a sigh had risen and began
Time's orient; aspiring, lo! from man
Came thoughts of things eternal; and at last
The hope of sudden conquest, and he span
In mind the great abyss, and leaped: upbrast
Strong the chaotic power, and to the depths he
passed.

XVI.

“ And lo! he lay within the gulf; before
The city wonderful, pre-temporal, strong;
Behind the lofty eminence; the roar
Of spheres and orbs around, a motley throng,
The fell offspring of chaos; and along
The vale the noise re-echoed: from on high
Came tumbling mass, and buried deep, among
The planets went his call: came the reply:
‘ Though man may fall in death, the thought can
never die.’

XVII.

“ The thought can never die; the ages pass;
Fell destiny is destined in its course
To suffer fell defeat; the cruel mass
Must conquer often, yet so much of force

Lies in the smallest germ of thought, resource
To rise again eternal is; afar
The sun shines down to aid it: from remorse
It springs to greater things—the raging war
Has purified the soul a better life to share.

XVIII.

“ See’st thou yon tender babe! The eagle claws
But pierce to purify; by talon rent
The outer wall may perish, but no pause
Doth come unto the spirit, heaving pent;
The grief and misery are heaven sent
To goad to lend a quickening o’er the earth.
The soul is eager, nor shall strife relent
Till over chaos shall it dance in mirth—
As gold is purged by fire, by conquest is man’s
birth.

XIX.

“ Peace, peace, go forth with patience: In the
flight
Of eagle, and of infant hither borne
On the aëreal flood, a ray of light
Comes forth to earth; the talon as a thorn
Rude pierces to the quick; within the bone

The marrow and the oil are stored to flow
Forever o'er the universe: the morn
Thou sawest this fair infant in the glow
Of dawning light began fell evil's overthrow."

XX.

Then turned I to the eagle: o'er the flood
It winged from land to land all tireless;
The infant, firmly bound, in patient mood,
Nor screamed nor showed a trace of weariness,
Yet agony was written; its distress
Was grievous, yet the faith within its veins
Imbued it with a hue of loveliness —
So great its task to lift the seas and plains,
Inhabited by man, to freedom from all chains.

XXI.

But the imperial city, wonderful,
Is seen; its spires reaching to the skies,
Decked, ornamented, graceful, bountiful
In gold and silver; lofty fanes arise,
But one surpasseth all, the ancient prize
And heritage of ages; there within
A veil-hid palace, lo! the bird aspires
To hurl its victim in the gulf: the din
May drown its voice for aye, submerged 'neath
Papal sin.

XXII.

But lo! upon a hill, a hill of gloom,
Uprose a cross: the infant seized and bore,
Leaving behind the shrouded empty tomb
And faced unto the future: on before
Were dizzy heights: behind the cruel gore;
Yet on its breast it laid the bloody cross;
The left hand grasped in faith the time of yore
Since the fell power conquered life:—the loss
Is seen as tarnished gold, gold mixed with earth
and dross.

XXIII.

And in the right the palm of victory
Is held towards the sun: the eagle's hold
Is lost; the child has gained its liberty;
Another hand doth bear, another fold
Doth beckon to it; glorious to behold,
Afar a city new by shining river
Stands to restore fair Eden as of old;
To bind with chains in bonds that cannot
sever
The fallen race of earth unto the vast forever.

XXIV.

The city gates face to the placid sea
Of pearl that around doth sleep: a stream

Cool, clear as crystal, flowing merrily
Around about: its waters gaily teem
With healing gold; life bubbling in the beam
And north and south, and all around doth peer
The gates far o'er the flood: they weeping seem
To beckon to the pilgrim far and near;
And on the threshold set do angel forms appear.

XXV.

Here came the infant, "Purity" its name,
Borne by a magic hand, and to the gate
That nearest lies to Eden; there the fane
Is grandest, for it is the entrance strait,
Straight from the vale Elysian; and, there,
sate
The angels fair, and scanning they behold
The infant on the stream, the crown of state
Upon its brow; all bright the glittering gold—
Bound to its breast the cross of heavenly form
and mould.

XXVI.

And spoke the angel: "Thou hast come, fair
child
Of innocence! yet misery on thy brow

Is written: thou hast been so long beguiled;
The gates, ajar, give entrance to thee now;
And as from thy deep wounds henceforth did
 flow
The cruel gore of ages, now within
These walls, in love forever more shall go,
Till time has ceased, a force to conquer sin;
And by this force alone, man may his entrance
 win.

XXVII.

Then spake the child of purity and life:
"Alone amid the surging waves I lay
Upon a sandy beach; the time of strife
Had passed, I deemèd, from our shores away,
And in sweet peace we slept; but cruel day
Brought gloom and misery; yet far o'er the
 deep
To distances I scarce beheld there lay
Horizons grand; I wakened from my sleep
And suffering for the world I learned how God
 must weep."

XXVIII.

The angel thus replied:—"Thy life was pure;
Thy life was won: eternal on the roll

Thy name was writ forever to endure;
But man is conquered by the suffering soul;
Not part of earth we own, but pure the whole
Must come unto this gate:—the eagle strong
Now conquered in the Abyss lies; and all
The lands and tracks where thou hast coursed
 along
Are seeking entrance in, awakened by thy song.”

“ RECIPROCUS.”

I.

AMONG the rugged hills the wind was straying,
The rising sun shone faintly through the glen,
The lofty oak with giant form displaying
Shadows that hid the forms of sleeping men;
The camp fires smouldered lowly and when
The azure light around more clearly came,
The bugle called to battle; rousing then
Each soldier turned to each; the fiery flame
Of ardour for the fight his spirit overcame.

II.

Then file on file from right to left were dressed
The blood-stained veterans of the cruel war;
Steady each, arm in hand, they forward pressed
The victory or defeat alike to share:
Now soared the sun aloft; the amber glare
Revealed the foe upon a hilltop set;
The order rang along the line, “ Prepare!”

Then "Forward!" In the grapple they are met,
As over hill and dale loud blared the great
trumpet.

III.

The standard bearer 'mongst the hosts was
seen,
And broken were the files; the flag was rent
By blade and ball; upon the bloody green
The dead and fallen lay all rudely pent:
"The standard to the fore!" the word was
sent;
The bearer clutched, but from a land afar
The voice of one seemed echoing; he bent
Towards it, and it came more loud and clear,
The voice of one so fair half swooning and in fear.

IV.

He called up happy moments, and the time
When he was with her ere the bugle call
Led him thus from her side to this lone clime
Amid the carnage of the field to fall;
Yea, yield to space his breath, his life, his all:
The thought pressed on him, and the faery form
Across the waters gleamed, him to enthrall;—
"Oh! that the soldier never had been born,
Than thus to severed be, alas, to ne'er return!"

V.

The contest grew more deadly, and the storm
Of shot and shell around did fiercely pour;
The steel was clashing, and the standard, torn,
Seemed to be all but lost: “They who adore
The carnage of the battle with its gore
May hold the contest dear; my land and home
Invite me; I will fight nor battle more.”

Then hurling down the standard, all alone
He left the field of war to sail across the foam.

VI.

The day was lost; the standard down, his hosts
Reeled backwards and the enemy's bold sweep,
As eagle on its prey, now fell; as ghosts
They flashed the sword of death; each moulder-
ing heap

Bespoke a tale of sorrow that did steep
The widowed home in mourning; o'er the sea
The standard bearer furrowed; he did keep
All silent of his self-willed destiny,
Sailing to meet his love in thus gained liberty.

VII.

The field was lost; the throne that stood afar
Was tottering to a fall; the setting sun

Was red as crimson; king and prince prepare
To meet the end of empire begun
By the betrayal of the flag; a son
Had thus become a traitor; that which was
Must come to nothingness; that which was
done
Repaired no more can be; love's thoughts sur-
pass
The deeds of empire that must raise the fallen
mass.

VIII.

Ere long the ship that bore the recreant hence
Was caught up by the breeze, and borne along;
The sea was tossed; its angry countenance
Did foam; the billows sang a hissing song;
The ship glode swiftly onward; last among
The rocky islands of the southern sea
The storm clouds darkly o'er the vessel hung;
The falcon shouted grief and misery:—
Upon an island bare the shipwrecked soldier lay.

IX.

The horrors of the angry sea, the spell
Of fading echoes, and the lights afar

That seemed to near and yet did distant dwell
 Smote to his heart, and sick he did prepare
 A cruel life or death alike to share;
 But death withdrew, and life seemed absent;
 then

The moon arose above with angry stare:
 He turned his thoughts to things of man and
 men,
 And dreamed he slept once more within the mar-
 tial glen.

X.

But he no more the glen, the battlefield,
 The standard, or the conquest, will behold;
 His choice was made; he chose the land to
 yield,
 And for a fair one had his country sold;
 And now the sorrows o'er his bosom rolled,
 Nor sleep nor solace came his mind to cheer;
 The bells of sea ceased not, nor ever tolled
 His end, yet lowly on the isle, his bier
 Seemed to his waiting soul a promise ever dear.

XI.

Meanwhile across the craggy rocks there came
 A form so handsome; death in life was she.

She laid her hand upon his brow, and shame
Was 'graven there; she knew, and angrily
Writ on the shame the counter "misery;"
"Thus must thy shame be cancelled;" then she
 passed;
Her faery form went coursing o'er the sea:—
Deep guilt by weary travail is erased.—
He slept, but all before his dimmed eyes was
 glassed.

XII.

Then darkened forms, some winged, and many
 horned,
Encircled him around, and putting forth
Arms many as the beings him alarmed;
Then saw he spectres floating o'er the earth,
The ghosts of slain heroes:—from his birth
Till now he reckoned up his life, and said:
"The road of fame is laid for men of worth;
The way of joy is for the living dead:
Along that course too long have I been hither
 led."

XIII.

The day dawned once again; a brightened sun
Revealed the gory field; the vulture preyed

Upon the blood-stained corpses, nor did shun
To tear or rend 'till row by row was laid
Each soldier in his resting place arrayed
In uniform of war;—an angel came
And on a scroll awrote the names, then prayed
Unto the God of battle, then a chain
Of gold was layed o'er all their spirits to reclaim.

XIV.

Then stood the spirits where the corses lay,
And gallantly they stood; one absent soul
Loomed but to vanish; he had gone astray,
And fallen short of triumph at the goal,
And far away did misery on him roll
Forever as it seemed, an inner war;
And weary now he ever heard the toll
Of angel bells, and 'sooth he did prepare
To wander farther still his grief away to wear.

XV.

And wand'ring o'er the island day by day,
He scanned the sea for sails, and then he made
A ship of bark, and all despondently
Set forth to view the islands that arrayed

In verdant colours loomed: the first assayed
Was dwelt upon by cannibals; they seized
Him as he stepped ashore, and in the shade
Cast lots whose he should be, and there they
gazed
Upon him all so fair, and then withdrew amazed.

XVI.

Despairing of his life, he swooned and slept,
And 'round him did they dance and merr'ly
sang;
Then one a vigil o'er the captive kept,
As far the others strayed; he heard the clang
Of arms and spears; it chilled him as it rang
Over the rocks; the day was bright and fair,
And over hill and dale the hours long
The sounds came down upon his drowsy ear;
He lived, but lived in death so dreadful was his
fear.

XVII.

At eve returning, to a tree they bound
Their lonely captive hand and foot and knee,
Then joining hands they danced him all
around,
And sang and leaped and called so joyously

That e'en he longed with them to merry be;
 But such was not the privilege of a slave,
 Nor could he hope to gain his liberty,
 So still he stood and firm as warrior brave,
 And trusted thus himself from cruel death to
 save.

XVIII.

Then did they lay them down again to sleep,
 And all around, yet fastened firm was he,
 And when the airs were silent he did weep,
 And wished that one could keep him company;
 But she was far across the rolling sea
 Awaiting when the battle roll was read;
 Yet ne'er appeared his name that she could see,
 Neither among the living nor the dead;
 She fainting swooned and by a friend was home-
 ward led.

XIX.

She thought that in a cruel grave, unknown,
 He might have laid been; she turned and
 wept,
 And when the year all sadly thus had flown,
 Another tender vigil o'er her kept;
 Yea! watched above her when at night she
 slept,

And guarded her from shame :—the bridal arch
Was reared and two in happiness were steep,
Nor for the soldier, lost, in any church
Was set a cross of grief, nor woven any larch.

XX.

Days passed, and on the island still he strayed
Among the cannibals, and they him fed;
And on a great feast day they forth him laid
Upon a block to sever his dear head;
He broke the bands and o'er the rocks he fled,
And 'scaped their hands nor could they e'er
him find,
And last they ceased the search and deemed
him dead,
For he was hid securely, sore in mind,
Within a mountain cave secure from wave and
wind.

XXI.

He fed upon the herbs and huts, that lay
Beneath the spreading beech, gathered by
night,
For by the day he lay most wearily
Within his dungeon, and the amber light

Did scare him, yet concealèd from all sight
 He kept himself for many days, and last
 He stole as fell the darkened shades of night,
 Into a fragile skiff, and silent passed
 Beyond this isle of grief that long had held him
 fast.

XXII.

Then glided he the islands far among
 'Till lo, upon a bright and glorious morn,
 A pirate ship espied him, and along
 Beside him was their vessel swiftly borne:
 Of all his vesture was he quickly shorn,
 And sentenced to the galleys; there he spent
 The many cruel months by scourging torn;
 But never once his task he must relent
 While for the many hours he thus was toiling
 bent.

XXIII.

He writhed in anguish, and was like to lift
 The poisoned potion to his lips, but stayed
 The cruel death, and last there came a rift
 Into the side of this rude ship; delayed,
 Yea, stranded on a rock it stood; he prayed
 To heaven for relief, and shortly thence

A frigate 'on the pirate vessel preyed;
They saw this one of fairer countenance,
And took him as their own, nor deemed him an
offence.

XXIV.

Their ship was bound unto a southern port,
And with them did he sail; and down among
The icebergs of the polar seas did sport
That venturous ship, and swiftly borne along.
The growling icebergs sang a doleful song,
Not pleasing, yet he bore it patiently,
And o'er his head the cruel curse was hung;
He sickened at the dreadful memory
Of that which he had done upon that fatal day.

XXV.

The clamour and the noises, that ensued
From the conflicting icebergs, seemed to say
That spirits just as many had pursued
As fell upon the field that awful day;
A dream arose of how victoriously
The army might have triumphed, but not now
Was such to dreamèd be, and angrily
The voices ever nearer seemed to grow,
And e'en the breezes seemed the doleful tale to
blow.

XXVI.

Upon the deck he fell, and in a swoon
 The ship seemed all awheeling 'round to be;
 The darkness came though yet it was but noon:
 Ah! full his heart of grief and misery.—
 Where am I? wildly wondering 'quired he.
 And one came forth in pity: by the hand
 She raised him up and spoke so cheeringly
 That bravely 'mid the throng he up did stand,
 But ne'er could he behold a sight of any land.

XXVII.

In pity then the lady led him forth
 Into a cabin decked so handsomely;
 He seemèd to come through a second birth,
 The fair one charmed his soul so wondrously:
 He hoped that ever with him she might be;
 But she withdrew, but no more could he trace
 The floating forms before his blinded e'e;
 And though he faced the dull cold view of
 space,
 A soul seemed ever nigh to charm with winsome
 grace.

XXVIII.

He clamoured for the orisons of night
 That in a far off chapel he did hear

But which despised he as a youthful wight,
And ever held the field of sport more dear.
And nevermore the lady did appear
To charm him with her grace, and last he slept;
She then approached his cabin door so near,
That for the stranded soul she even wept,
And he within his heart a loving memory kept.

XXIX.

Oh fairest one! said he, thy presence looms
In vision ever near me; I would fall
A prey to dark and melancholy swoons
Did not thy loving presence me enthrall
As being still beside me: I could call
E'en to the virgin mother, and would count
That absent presence dearest, and my all
Would yielded be in pleasure thus to mount
Above the toils of life to know thy sacred fount.

XXX

The love that's unseen is the love that gives.
The heart the true impulse to valiant deeds,
And ever present to the soul it lives,
And with him in the conflict ever bleeds;

It is not distant calling, but it feeds
 A nobler spirit with a nobler still,
 And yields itself according to his needs,
 A complementary spirit, life, and will,
 That serves the weak and false within the man to
 kill.

XXXI.

Now was the truant waking to a truth
 Before undreamed within his soul, so pent
 With passion for a maiden who in sooth
 Was charming with embraces innocent,
 That caused him in the battle to relent,
 E'en though the balance of the nation swung
 By her subduing all this merriment:—
 Such well may charming be unto the young,
 But of true womanhood, 'tis never found among.

XXXII.

And so, though now far in the polar seas,
 Icebound, he seized his harp of well-taught
 string,
 And sweetest music floated on the breeze,
 The summing strain of all his wandering,
 That all the crew about him it did bring
 To hear a tale of valorous triumph, past,

Of virtue; and a cruel shuddering
Seemed as a spell upon the earthly cast,
Yet did his truthful song triumphant hold them
fast.

1.

A spirit vast and boundless as the deep
Doth o'er each waking soul a vigil keep
As beautiful as that bright hue adorning
The radiance of the great encircling dome,
That crimson red is seen at early morning
Waking the bud and flower and returning
Each day, and fain would make the earth its
home,

And shining on each flower as if alone
It lived for them; a charmèd atmosphere

It sends thus to the poor but trusting soul,
Strewing a fragrance round us everywhere;
Smiting the souls as hard as is the desert
bare.

2.

Calm is that spirit of eternity;
Calm o'er the lands or waters doth it loom;
And it doth claim a rightful sov'reignty,
And sits enthroned in lofty majesty;
Yet dull it often seems as is the moon

That hangs above the lofty pine that sailing
 Respondeth:—But at leisure coursing on
 The orb of all the sunlight now availing,
 Shines bright to lead us to a region hence;
 Still is that spirit ever to us yearning
 And we as cold as clay its beauty still un-
 earning.

3.

Calm wast thou, mother spirit, when I burst
 The bounds that we call self, and I was
 borne
 Far onward with the giddy life that perst
 Into my heart when I could not discern
 The false instinct from truth; nor more
 could learn
 To love the truth that over me was glowing
 So fair, a rainbow arch of light divine;
 My heart within my bosom overflowing
 Refused in response to thy call to shine,
 And threw itself upon a flowery bier
 Of death, and rose again to wander sickly
 here.

4.

But lo, the loveliness of time and being
 Ascendeth now my soul, and from on high

Comes ever near the power that agreeing
Can teach the soul of sinful man to die.
The awfulness of life, this light displaying,
Can teach that even death has majesty,
And memory, the sinful self now slaying,
Grasps certain hold of life and liberty,
And life is won when love in truth is grasped ;
And love is known when by the funeral pyre
With unfeigned hope we watch the soul of
man expire.

5.

Free were we born, but from our souls there
fled
This light when low we dipt: the things of
earth
Came to us and we lived as all but dead,
And so is life, unknown a second birth.
The phantom light o'er this cold sea is glow-
ing;
O'er every land and clime a lighted lamp
Shines down upon us, and to overflowing
Our souls are filled, nor age nor sickness
damp
The hope within that rules us; we are free,
And love in life doth write our destiny,
And with this hope we set to seek our liberty.

6.

Avenged is my deed ; but through the gloom
My soul has found the earth's most sacred
treasure.

The sun stands o'er me as at early noon ;
Before it sets I forward go to measure

The bands that bind the universe, and
hence

I shall survey and mark the countenance
Of all below the sky ; but now beholding
A radiance, I cease, but thou shalt hear me
When through the light divine my song is
moulding

The future of the life that now I bear me,
A portion of the great eternal substance,
That lighteth then the earth with heaven's
countenance.

XXXIII.

Now as his harp he lowered came a sound
Of rarest tune, in vocal waves entwining
The human and the Godlike, that enwound,
Were warring in the elements : reclining
Towards the east he saw a form repining
Upon a rocky shore, and so he prest

His hand unto his heart, and then resigning
His will unto that being he disperst
The gloom that hung around, and life on him had
burst.

XXXIV.

Then from their ship he parted, and they heard
His magic bark hiss o'er the briny sea
Among the icebergs; as a faery bird
He made his dash for life and liberty,
And well, alas he did it; angrily
The sea was roaring like unto upheave;
But he had left that ship of misery,
And for the past alone his soul did grieve,
And hence he sought anew a chord of life to
weave.

XXXV.

And so it chanced one evening there fell
A light across his path; he did aspire
The nature of that magic light to tell,
But then it burst as doth a raging fire,
And he was seared until he did expire,
And yielded the old self, and 'rose anew
As from among the embers of a sire;
And gazed upon the world with grander view,
And sought through all mischance to cling unto
the true.

XXXVI.

My land, my native land! for thee I pine;
 To learn what thou hast suffered for my sake;
 Then all around the moonbeams seemed to
 shine,

And on the same lone hill he did awake,
 And there again the standard he did take,
 And bore it bravely up the rugged hill,
 And on the peak a motto he did stake:

“Duty e’en though it drag thee down to hell!”
 And with these words of truth ayielding life he
 fell.

“ZENIA.”

CANTO I.

I.

FAIR harp that oft hath sung the patriot strain,
Melodious harp of Erin! from afar
Brave Hellas echoes o'er the raging main;
Yea! Delphi's golden portals stand ajar
To give thy minstrels welcome:—may it share
Thy all inspiring strains!—thy lofty soul,
On the Pierean heights, may ever wear
The olive and the bow: time on doth roll;
Bear back, oh isle, the harp thou from Pireaus
stole!

II.

In a fair western isle a youth was born,
Who rose as magic minstrel of his land,
And journeyed east a goddess to suborn,
And so was outcast to a foreign strand;

Yet had he stolen from her a bright wand,
And this within his bosom grew to be
A harp of life; he furrowed in the sand
Two words in crimson, "Erin. Liberty,"
And then he set his course far westward o'er the
sea.

III.

The goddess followed from afar, and she
Was not all anger: in her soul a flame
Akin to love, she called it ci'vil'ty,
Still lingered, and she sought his home and
name;
But he went forth insatiate for fame
'Till last with weary eyes he gazed afar,
And saw an orb set in the heavenly frame,
A pilgrim soul, it glittered as a star;
He held his harp aloft and trusted to its care.

IV.

It journeyed, and he coursed his way along
Over the hills and moors, and o'er the sea,
And everywhere was heard the minstrel song;
The two had formed a merry minstrelsy;
Together did they course all merrily;
It sat within the firmament on high,

And when he faltered it led forth in glee,
When he was strong and heard his pilgrim
 sigh,
He tuned his harp and brought the star unto him
 nigh.

V.

And when it came he spoke, and by his word
He made his aspirations known, and when
He knew not where to journey, he inferred
From its fair twinkling countenance, and then
There was a harmony 'twixt stars and men;
The world was growing grander; he aspired
To link the earth and heavens; from his glen
A golden rocket one fair morn he fired;
The star swooped low and caught and heaven-
 ward retired.

VI.

The goddess, lying on her flowery bier,
Around her saw a hallowed sheen; she rose,
And thought his form did in the star appear,
Then did the star all languidly repose,
And far beyond this vale to search she chose,
Deeming no star could rest on which he rode;

But land nor sea would not this knight disclose:—

Despairing, in her dwelling, did she nod;
He came down from a hill; looked into her abode.

VII.

Then to the hills she followed, and the day
Was spent in wearily tripping through the
glen;

She called aloud, the echoes died away;
Asleep one night within a marshy fen
She dreamed of earth and then of things and
men,

And to her vision rolled a gleam of light:
She started up; went forth apace, and then
Beheld him on a mountain peak: the height
Gleamed as an armed force thronged in the pale
moonlight.

VIII.

“A goddess is the queen of earth,” she said,
“And man must fall a victim to her will”:—
Then was she to the mountain hither led,
And stood close by the minstrel on the hill:
She marvelled at his prowess and his skill:—
He smote his breast and said, “The weak ones
die;

The languid ones, the goddesses may kill;
For me my strength is in the heavens high:—
When I resolve to walk they lift me and I fly.

IX.

“ I fly, but not aëreal wings do bear;
Nor the enchanting angels lure me on,
But when close by a gentle voice I hear
I yield myself all meekly then to one,
And he descends from off his lofty throne;—
Greater than goddesses or men is he;—
One star alone doth bear me; I have won
My fight and hence have gained my liberty,
And now I course at will over the timeless sea.”

X.

She heard; then down the nether hill; below
She found a cave that onward ever moved;
She entered; followed; there a stream did flow
Elysian in its brightness, and she loved
The being that could build thus, and she robed
Herself in pilgrim's garb, and forth did go;
But soon her aery thoughts were much disturbed
Around her shone a dark and lurid glow:—
She quaked; she faced a land, the vale of earthly
woe.

XI.

She quaked; she dreamed, she pondered, and
 she planned
 Within her mind inventions and designs;
 Then walking forth the world around she
 scanned,
 Beheld all glorious deep caves and mines;
 Then for a moment she to earth resigns
 Her will, and ever onward o'er the flood
 She flew and traversed counteries and climes,
 Returning last to stand where she had stood
 A goddess still, and fair, but with the earth im-
 bued.

XII.

Yea; to Pireus did she turn; the hill
 Was caverned, channeled, mystic, wonderful:
 She liked it not; 'twas glorious, but still
 She loved what she had seen; the place seemed
 dull:—
 For ages she had bound beneath her spell
 Those whom she willed:—a conqueror had
 come;
 Her sacred wand that planted in a dell
 Had grown beneath the radiance of the sun,
 Into a harp that had a minstrelsy begun.

XIII.

She called her angels nigh, and to them spoke,
“ Our hill doth stand for ages; it hath stood
The fiercest storms of sea, the winds that broke
The Roman eagle wing; storms that subdued
The Persian power: rising o’er the flood
From east to west our claim was owned; the
ray
That shone fair from this oracle withstood
The volleys of the enemy:—the day
Has dawned when we are doomed; yea, doomed
to pass away.

XIV.

“ This lofty fane doth beauty breathe; the
heavens
Shine down upon our azure brow; the beam
Ethereal; ’tis true, within us leavens
Much darkness, yet too idly do we dream:
And life is not to man what it may seem
To us æreal set: this ancient dome
Must many coloured be; the golden gleam
Shining upon the earth hath us outgrown
’Till now the race of man fair Delphi scarce may
own.”

XV.

Meanwhile the minstrel winging o'er the earth
Approached the couch of maidens; he could
hear

Within each bosom throbbing for a birth
Of something grander than did ever bear
A mother yet, a son so pure and fair
That goddesses might woo him—he returned
And sang until the earth did brightness wear,
All emerald hued;—then far off he discerned
A form set in the sky to which his spirit burned.

XVI.

He trod o'er hill and dale, he sighed and
grieved

To thus behold a fallen human kind:—
He saw a mother of her child bereaved;
She wept not but all taciturn reclined
Upon a mouldy couch, nor could she find
Maternal grief nor joy:—he 'quired why
She thus to earth her tender babe resigned?
She turned and gazed, and answered in reply:
“Well had it been my fate a tender babe to die!”

XVII.

Then to her soul a question did he put :
“ Lov’st thou thy husband, woman? thou
wouldst love
This infant for his sake, and thou wouldst shut
Thine anger in a cave; yea, thou wouldst move
With that same loving reverence that wove
The mantle of existence; Thou as twain
Wouldst love not self for self: yea; one above
Loved life for man and loved it to regain
The wasted souls of men by thy fell hatred slain.”

XVIII.

She started from her seat, and grasped her
child,
And pressed it to her bosom; it awaked;
She kissed it gently on the cheek then smiled
And fell to earth as dead; the minstrel
quaked:—
Her anger now and love for death were slaked;
She loved life for her children, and was sped
Her soul into the lower world; she waked
To see the old and angry spirit dead—
In that she truly loved, she was to heaven led.

XIX.

Careering on the wingèd winds, his course
 Had not ascended to the noonday sun;
 He saw a man hard labouring perforce
 To fire from the heights a heavy gun;—
 It pointed fair a city down upon:—
 He asked him why he did so; he replied:
 “The king doth bid me do thus; it is done.”
 And with the word the burning match he
 ’plied;
 He gazed below and laughed; the hundreds now
 had died.

XX.

“Know’st thou the goddess of Pireus’ mount?”
 “Know her?” he said; “she sings of love and
 war:
 She bade the warrior queen her hosts anoint,
 And bade her fight her home and kindred for;
 And when upon the slaughtered field the glare
 Of the dim fading sun in pity poured,
 She came, and bade the queen her harp prepare
 To sing the strains of heroes she adored,
 Of man who with the steel his fellowmen had
 gored.”

XXI.

“Yea; in the depth,” the minstrel knight replied,

“Yea; mine own vales have teemed with
slaughtered men:

Mine island queen beheld it, and she sighed;
What she did not avow she saw, and then
She turned to weep in silent love, and when
The chariot had passed o’er her fields, she
called

Her sons and daughters to her side; as men
With her kind words their beings were ap-
palled:—

She told some lovely tales; her children were en-
thralled.

XXII.

“ ‘When ceased the last great cannon on the
height,

Where fell ambrosial splendour, one uprose
Whose face was wan and pale, and at the sight
His comrades did their bitter grief disclose;
Then from their ranks the fairest ones he chose,
And sent them forth as conquerors to quell
The evil spirits of the world: they rose

As beacons o’er the earth, and then they fell;
As bombs of peace they burst, and sounded war’s
death knell!”

XXIII.

“ She called the maidens to her side, and spoke
 In accents tender; beauteous her tones:
 ‘ A fair one once from orisons awoke,
 And heard around her cot the wailing groans
 Of dying soldiers, and the smothered moans
 Of mothers thus bereaved; and then she said,
 “ A warrior I shall raise, the pride of thrones;
 Then when by might the world is forward led;
 A warrior of the peace I shall give forth instead.

XXIV.

“ “ Lo from this isle a conqueror shall rise,
 ‘ Victor invictus,’ in his majesty
 By war he shall suppress the angry cries
 That rise from those proclaiming liberty;
 Yea, liberty, but gained by misery:—
 The fell swoop of the eagle he shall cross
 Yea bear it to the deepest gulf, then lay
 Upon the grave the Emerald and the cross—
 Lo, this lone trophy shall the crown of God em-
 boss.

XXV.

“ “ The queen of Sheba came far from the
 south
 To glean some words of wisdom from a king;

To see a prince imperial; from his mouth
To learn great mysteries:—time on her wing
Hath borne the seed as fruit to ripening,
And in the west the maize and corn appear
As green as in the verdure of the spring;
As ripe as when the autumn bald and sere
Doth come; and lo, the pride of kings is thronèd
here.” ” ”

XXVI.

Down by the hazel copse at eve there kneeled
The minstrel knight, the warrior, and the
queen,
And lo, a scroll some precious words revealed;
And all around there shone a hallowed sheen
Of golden light diffused; and on the green
Was laid an open scroll; the minstrel youth
Held high a torch; they saw the words I ween
As never seen before, the words of truth,
That shone from ancient page in clearest light
forsooth.

XXVII.

Then did the minstrel dim the torch, and seize
The lines thus written: to the goddess muse
He loosed them forth, and wafted on the breeze
They found her on her cot, a sad recluse:

She saw the faery hand, nor did refuse
 To ope the roll, and as she opened read
 A message from the earth herein ensues,
 “That never more o’er fields of slaughtered
 dead
 Shall thy dull lyre stray, nor liberty be led.”

XXVIII.

She then awoke; descended from the mount,
 No moment lost, her wings scarce ceased, when
 lo!
 In less of time than she had learned to count
 The dome came tumbling to the vale below;
 The wreckage all around, fair in the glow
 She saw her princes lie, and kings of state:
 She knew it meant a crushing overthrow;
 It came not unexpected, and though late,
 The fall had saved mankind from an appalling
 fate.

XXIX.

She reckoned then that from the golden wand,
 So early stolen from her breast did grow
 A harp of life, a creature: in the sand
 He had awritten ‘Liberty’ below;

Yea, 'Liberty' illumined in the glow
Of the arboreal light; yea, as the tree
From which a healing balm doth ever flow;
This harp stood by the word writ 'Liberty'
And overlooked afar the serpent of the sea.

XXX.

Sad, sad her fate; she yielded and the dawn
Beheld her journeying westward, there, to find
The minstrel knight so fair to look upon,
That on the lofty hilltop had reclined;
And forth she went, her will being now re-
signed:—
Yea hither went she forth:—an open gate
Stood in her path, and music of the wind
Made shipwreck of the armaments of state:—
The nation only stands as souls within are great.

XXXI.

"The nation only stands":—and on a height
Mounted above the sea, with lifted hand,
She saw the minstrel bold, and in the light
Below him lay imprinted in the sand
In crimson 'Liberty'; the silvery wand
Was held above him as a floating tree;

It poised, it lurched, it fell upon the sand
 Dashing the letters to the open sea;—
 Thus Erin spread abroad the motto ‘Liberty.’

XXXII.

Fate yieldeth to the sigh of love, though long
 The unawakened warrior may ride forth
 Cheered by the multitude, a giddy throng,
 A conqueror indeed, if man is earth;
 Yet for a nobler mission given birth
 His fiery blast, his trumpet call, may be
 Love passion ruling all; the things of mirth
 Are to be scornèd; but true liberty
 Is love, though unreturned that love may often
 be.

XXXIII.

Fate rideth down with chariot wings to death
 The weak ones of the universe of light;
 Love beareth in its voice a living breath,
 A silent conqueror in every fight,
 Nor reckons of the wrongs, nor of the right
 Of its own bargains made; but on doth swell,
 Inspiring, as when travellers in the night
 Hear from a tower chime the silvery bell;
 Inspiring as when Christ on earth’s bare bosom
 fell.

XXXIV.

The light breaks o'er the sea; the minstrel
wakes
From his well earned slumber; once again
He takes him to the world of things; the flakes
Of snow, were falling in the silent main;
Glistening, they mildly sank and rose again;
Chafed hither by the lashing foam they broke,
And chafed against each other; all in vain
They sought a separate being, then there spoke
A voice as from the sea; the crystals then awoke.

XXXV.

They 'woke, and smiled within the morning
light,
And laughed to thus the other form behold,
Each fair as each, each sparkling amber bright,
Each loving each beheld as fair as gold
The lovelight on the fiery form; the mould
Of the eternal type, and then they wept
That so they chafed each other, and they sold
Their arms and steel for bread; and while they
slept
A form raised high above a vigil o'er them kept.

XXXVI.

Awakening from a dream, each to each said:
 “What watched us when we slept?” The sea
 replied,
 “Thou, in my bosom born, art by me fed,
 And I was with thee even when thou cried;
 Yea listening to the weary when they sighed
 I gave thee birth from all eternity;
 The greatest have upon my strength relied,
 And in me have they found their liberty:
 Fear not, oh soul! love all; trust evermore in
 me!”

XXXVII.

Then on each other did the crystals smile,
 And one fair dream of peace embalmed the
 whole;
 They slept, but not as weary, wretched, vile,
 They felt now conscious, coursing to a goal,
 Fair creatures of one race; each kindred soul
 Loved each, and though upheaved the raging
 main,
 All onward now harmoniously did roll
 Without a blot or scourge, or e'en a stain:—
 One gentle word of truth did all to life reclaim.

XXXVIII.

The world was wheeling bitterly around;
Pireaus lay forsaken, on the mount
The crumbled stones did lie, a truthless mound;
The goddess sought in truth another fount
Yea; and she found: the unseen did anoint
Two heads together; right and left he placed
A hand upon each faery head; the count
Was made, and then he lifted them, and
crossed;
Then gave to each a crown with richest gold embossed.

XXXIX.

He gave to each a crown of life and said
“The west and east of earth have met; the day
Has come when to one fountain hither led
The nations all shall come to drink, and say
In silence deep, ‘Too long did chivalry,
And boast of strength imperial, deride
The wailing of the weak ones: angrily
Thy princes o’er the fallen ones did ride:—
Now in one fellowship forever they abide.’

XL

“Yea, trodden one, O Erin, thy bright star
Has led thee o’er the dismal sea of life;

Yet in thy hand the wand did lure thee fair
 Above the den of brawling and of strife;
 Yet underneath were saddened memories rife;
 But thou wast reared to sing: thy day has come
 The veil withdrawn, thou sittest on a reef
 The ship of state has stranded, yet the sun
 Beholds thee on a rock, the great eternal one.

XLI.

Lo, linked are east and west; the diadem,
 A crown of pearl and ophir, has been twined
 With lilies, and the ocean's fairest gem
 Has to thy bosom, fair one, been consigned.
 Yea thou hast borne, and all in love resigned:—
 What now doth light the landscape?—O'er the
 deep
 The warships tumble headlong, madly, blind;
 The soldier kneels beside the bier to weep;
 Yea; prince and knight o'er death a tender vigil
 keep.”

XLII.

Then parted on the rosy dawn in peace
 The minstrel who had stolen, was it crime?
 The wand from the fair goddess: his release
 By her had now been granted; she did chime

Her silvery bells in gladness: fairest rhyme
Came floating from a new built throne; she
sang
A greeting from her temple; softest mime,
Of life was it; the spheres around did clang,
The star dipt low again, and silvery bells then
rang.

XLIII.

They rang to toll the peace; the conflict done;
The crimson stream of blood that early flowed
Upon the lonely hill, had overrun
All other streams of earth: the good bestowed
Unmerited had found response; there glowed
A cup of wine, a sparkling bowl, that said:
“Drink all of it!” the contents now had flowed
Pure into man; his veins by it were fed
Yea; one had lost his life, the many live instead.

XLIV.

There rode upon a star at early dawn
A winged messenger of light, his name
Was “Zenos,” dweller the fair shore upon;
Around the star there shone a fiery flame
Illumining the earth; an ancient fane
Before it set was tottering; it fell

And millions leaped to liberty again,
And crashing came the ancient king; his knell
Was ringing, and he ceased upon the earth to
dwell.

XLV.

Then coursing o'er the desert and the sea,
The star bade other temples fall; a fane
Once worshipped, and of great antiquity,
That buried deeply, from the depths again,
Came forth; the weaker ones in life to reign:
A hush fell on the earth; a magic door
Opened within the sky, and o'er the plain
The magic rays of light did purer pour:
“Peace, peace,” the angel said, “hath come for-
evermore.”

Note.—The conclusion of this poem, comprising two cantos in addition, is written, but is withheld for the present.—A.

EUVENESIS.

A tale of life, after the form of Spenser's great
allegory.

I.

NOT in those lights that over me displaying
The crimson hues of the aërial dome
Is seen the forms of faery phantoms playing
Upon their harps of gold; nor is the moon
That languidly among the clouds doth swoon
Fairest to me of all the scenes of night;
But far across the lake the wailing loon
Doth answer to my spirit's saddened plight,
If such in me doth dwell that spirit oft is hight.

II.

Not e'en the sighing of the winds can wake
Response within my numbed and weary soul

That reels as mad within me, to forsake
The which I oft could wish e'en ere the roll
Of time could bear me to my destined goal:
Yea; might I be transformèd, for afar
I hear the bells that ever seem to toll,
And o'er my head the glittering of a star
Doth beckon ever on where looms eternal war.

III.

Yet oft when in my anguish fancy seemed
To lure me onward, did I then recall
The youthful moments when I fondly dreamed
To be enthroned among the immortal
Of ages gone; yet trials great did fall
That sooth did send me reeling to the deep
There to my gods in agony to call,
To turn again in deep despair to weep;
To find relief when soft there fell the dews of
sleep.

IV.

Help me, Oh Goddess, then again to string
My weary harp: one last re-echoing sound
Breathes in my ear, that as a dove on wing
Doth hover o'er my head; the waters bound

Beneath my vessel; rising from a swoond
I greet the shores, and joyously the lea
Doth fade and fall before me, and around
The birds are making charming melody
As from the heavens a voice that heavenly might
be.

V.

Whilere now basking in a shady grove
Amid the firs and pines, ambrosial fed
There dwelt the form of Venus, known as love,
And by her side a tiny whelp she led,
That served her as a progeny instead;
For she ne'er yielded in a lawful love
But sought the joys of living by the dead;
So on a couch within a shady grove
She lay uncovered where the dwellers daily
drove.

VI.

And one descended from his car and came,
Greeting the fair one, and to answer made
Beside her on her couch of evil fame
His form that pure afore he quickly laid;
And rudely all his journey was delayed,
And having journeyed hither from her bower

In vain the race of man her art assayed,
None turning hither from that very hour;
And in her mind arose a pestilential stour.

VII.

Then 'gan she to upbraid the race of men,
And vile and angry were the oaths she vowed;
One night a call came from a far-off glen
A lightning flashed, then was there thunder
 loud
And from her saffron couch upright she stowd,
And glared across the moorlands, then there
 fell
A light upon her grove; she gently bowed:
A foe was lurking in a shady dell,
And from a lofty dome she heard a tolling bell.

VIII.

She deemed that he who lately close had lain
Beside her on the couch some mischief stirred,
And day and night around o'er all the plain
The sound came as the wailing of a bird
Bereaved of its fair young, and she inferred
That somewhere in the universe the cry

Of the fond creation mother voice was heard,
And when one night a-dreaming she did lie
A wingèd form came forth that could not pass
her by.

IX.

And on a hilltop set she saw the form
Of a fair ancient mother of the race,
And all around her children that were born
Into the kingdom by her sov'reign grace;
While she within the angry depths could trace
The millions slain by her lustful guile;
She saw the fiends come reeling from the place
That by her fallen weary, wretched, vile,
Now cursed her in their death in anguish all the
while.

X.

While th' mother virtue grieved in heartsick
love,
And mourned in pity for her fallen son,
Pouring forever on the accursed grove
Her blasphemy that thus the circling sun
Should countenance a work that was begun
By the queen mother of the race profest,

When Venuslike the crafty net she spun
That man desire for the love exprest,
That for that love was cursed, before supremely
blest.

XI.

Now when the dawn arose upon the hills,
Chasing the moon into the arctic seas,
The silver fount was flowing, and the rills
Were wont to leap and dance so joyously
That Nymphs came forth to dance in naked
glee
Around the silver fountain, and they made
So many courtesies, as we shall see,
To show their forms, and then they down them
laid
Upon the dewy grass, and there till noon they
stayed.

XII.

When Venus from her grove in full attire,—
As naked and as polished as could shine
A stone that burned within a tended fire
Selected and borne from a foreign clime,
For thus upon the mound she oft did climb,—
Came and among her Nymphs basked joyously,

And skirled unto the merry lilt or mime,
And all around they danced in laughing glee
And formèd on the mound a merry minstrelsy.

XIII.

High noon brought forth the sun upon a cloud
That all around a crimson fringe had made,
For thus the orb did modestly enshroud
Itself that thus the image might be stayed;
And when it stood above and had assayed,
As well it mote, the merry gathering,
All quickly down the western slope it strayed,
Ashamed to thus behold so gross a thing—
A band of naked Nymphs around so pure a
spring.

XIV.

Now at the eve it chanced that virtues' god
Was straying over hill and flowery dale,
Gazing at every earthly-built abode,
Peering beyond the mysteries that veil
The life of earth, and thus he did avail
Himself of every glowing circumstance,
And hearing from this mound a lowly wail
He hither turned, for fortune of rude chance
Had thus him forward led to there direct his
glance.

XV.

There bound in fetters lay a human soul,
The plaything of the Nymphs that stole his
 heart,
And from his bosom took it and did roll
It in their hands as by a magic art:
Ah me! he did beneath the treatment smart;
But when his soul was wasted then they held
Him by the hair and mocked him, and a dart
They sent for pleasure through him, and ex-
 pelled
Him who so foul and vile they in their ranks
 beheld.

XVI.

Then were the dews descending on the height,
And to the grove fair Venus took her way;
The Nymphs withdrew to nymphland that is
 hight
As faery land of pleasure; there they lay
In thinnest robes that sparkled rapturously,
And on their beds they stretched their naked
 form,
And tossed themselves about so heedlessly
That in the dark the dwelling seemed to swarm
With seekers of the lust, by that fell rapture
 torn.

XVII.

Whilome the god, descended from the fount,
Had found a valley yawning in the rear,
And in the pit of death he there did count
Innumerable the souls of men held dear,
And e'en the fallen spirits did appear
To call for vengeance on their cruel foe,
That by sheer beauty thus had drawn them
 near,
And cast them to the vale of earthly woe
As dust unto the dust, a hapless overthrow.

XVIII.

Then having made his entrance to the vale,
He passed within the valley where there lay
The rotting forms of humankind; a wail
Of anger rose to greet him, and the day
Came now upon the place so suddenly
That ere the Nymphs he could discern again,
They vanished far across the open sea,
And there he stood amid the millions slain,
While all the Nymphs afar had dipt within the
 main.

XIX.

Then did he break the couches, and upturned
The aery dwellings of the fiend-like throng,

And he as even came again returned,
But though he waited anxiously and long
They came not, nor discerned he any wrong;
And on the place an altar draped he made,
The fallen souls come from the dead among,
And at the shrine for evil Venus prayed,
And by that new raised mound these fallen souls
were laid.

XX.

But whither now the Nymphs or Venus went
He knew not, but 'twas there a lonely queen
Came forth and in the purest merriment
Gathered the youth of many lands, between
The many oceans, and upon the green
They stood as martialled hosts; and in the
night
The evil Venus nevermore was seen
But where she stood, in universal sight
A queenly form was set that purity was hight.

XXI.

Naught is there in the universe so sad
As virtue from a goodly race withdrawn;
The god of chastity came down, and led
Upon a chain a nimble little fawn,

And staked it in the centre of a lawn
Where passers by might greet it joyously;
Fair Venus with her tiny whelp had gone,
And now there danced around all merrily
Offspring of legal love in youthful ecstasy.

XXII.

For it was wedded to a spright so fair
That never seeking love else did it go;
The spright descended from the purer air
And thus escaped the curse of Venus' woe,
And adulation met its overthrow;
And purity came down on earth to reign,
Filling with holy love the vale below,
That Venus never might return again,
But she was banished quite, and sank within the
main.

AN ANTILOGUE.

(TO THE FOUR PRECEDING POEMS.)

I.

Now if you question of this history,
And are awaked to dreary wonderment,
Just turn attention to the things that be,
For from the heavens early gods were sent,
And calmly o'er the fallen race they bent,
And man was waked to know a higher power,
And fixed his gaze unto the skies intent,
Nor could the storm or tempest make him
 cower,
But took his rise from the fair gods' descending
 hour.

II.

The ancient Israelites in Egypt bound
Commandment sought from one they called
 the Lord,

And on the highest peak He oft was found,
And in the stones they carved the living word,
And this name all the children born had heard,
And e'en a star of light descending low
Upon a crimson cloud, or e'en a bird
That to the window of the ark did blow
Alike did serve a true commandment to bestow.

III.

And so they triumphed o'er the wind and wave
Of the rude desert or the Red Sea sand,
And rode upon the terror of the grave
On Nebo's lofty peak at last to stand,
For they had truly seen a guiding hand;
They laid their sacrifices on the fire
When safely they had come to Canaan's land;
Then raised a temple to their God, whose ire
Was stayed when in the flames He saw the gift
expire.

IV.

Forsooth when Sparta raised herself to fame,
And stood a bulwark of great strength and
power,
Their sons and daughters all unto them came,
And gave themselves for service from that
hour;

Nor could the steel of battle make them cower,
Nor did they fear the fiercest of her foes,
But threw themselves headlong into the stowre,
Where hapless falling 'mid the countless blows
They knew that God the brave doth shield from
further woes.

V.

And Rome that long had stood above the rest
Had taught her sons the fealty of state,
And they for service eager to her prest,
That set upon the Tiber called was great:
She early rose, and when her sun set late
'Twas that the spirit of true chivalry
Had ceased, and each for self lived, and they
ate
The luxury of self-indulgence free
To sink again to live in basest slavery.

VI.

When Alexander rode to Indus fair,
Beyond the bounds of empire, he did call
His legions to his side, and bade them share
The trials of this dreadful journey all,

And them to turn again he did forestall;
Then each forth from his selfish pleasures
came
And plunged in battles that did oft appal,
And drinking thus of Alexander's fame
His own he did secure, and great renown did
gain.

VII.

And Cyrus roused his Persian hosts to war,
Bestowing empire to his vast estate,
And all the dwellers from the lands afar
In loyalty beneath this ruler sate,
A crowned king the oracle of state,
The millions by his wisdom great upheld,
And over Babylon that long was great
The glorious conception of the world
Came as a wave of light that all self-will expelled.

VIII.

Now when it chanced in a lone counterie
A man arose superior to them all
Of Rome, or Persia, and for liberty
The valiant of the world did to him call,
He bade mankind before one ruler fall,
And this one ruler that was God profest

Had written with the image eternal
All the great treasures that the world possest,
And unto all that came He bade them be at rest.

IX.

Yet must the parent yield the child; the wife
Her husband for the cause, and each deny
The selfish pleasures of a narrow life,
E'en though oft callèd to the tomb to die,
And none must ask reward, nor in reply
Look to his place in this so grand a state,
But prone before the altar he must lie:
Who humbleth thus himself becometh great,
For he is linked in soul to universal state.

X.

Now when the ancient Waggoner had set
His yokèd team to drive across the sky,
There foamed before a raging rivulet
To pass through which was seemingly to die,
And yet no other way might he pass by;
So in the stream he plunged his team that hard
Did struggle 'gainst the current valiantly,
Yet never could they reach the further sward,
And death them in the face most melancholy
star'd.

XI.

Then did they yield themselves unto the stream,
And where the current flowed they little cared;
The waters rising over them did teem,
And roughly with the driver now it fared,
And he for death and doom himself prepared,
And well he died; the oxen, free again,
Unto the farther bank in faith now veered,
And with another heavy toiling strain
They stood upon the banks of the wild raging
main.

XII.

But not as oxen yoked and harnessèd
Did they attain unto the farther shore,
But doves of peace they changed to were in-
stead,
Nor harnessèd would they be evermore,
For on their heads the streaming sun-rays
pour:
They raised their wings and fanned the
charmèd air,
And high into the breathing air did soar
At which the naked heavens seemed to stare,
And all the land around to follow did prepare.

XIII.

Now, reckon, reader, all that I have said,
Some aery tales of thought on human life,
And when upon the altar you have laid
Your soul that from the toils of earth so rife
Has wearied of this all eternal stife,
Then as a dove beyond the hills and groves
Carolling on the breezes free from strife,
The ether world within your spirit moves,
And of this Ruler then you shall discern He loves.

XIV.

Now in the human breast a heavenly pang
To cross a foaming river oft doth lie,
And o'er this stream the storm-clouds seem to
hang
Beneath the radiance of a burning sky;
In sooth a dire destruction seemeth nigh,
Yet doth a smiling land lie on before,
That beckons to the soul so biddingly,
Yet 'cross that stream unto the other shore
The timid soul doth fear to journey evermore.

XV.

Yet in the stream a balm, and in the flood
That is so frightening to the human eye,

There is a mixture of the Saviour's blood,
That all concealed beneath the foam doth lie,
And plunging It doth purge so wondrously
That all the carnal of this low estate
Doth yield, and on the spirit's wings we fly
To where The Throne in grandeur firm is sate,
And pure as doves of peace the human is elate.

CONCLUSION.

I.

Now who these tales of many forms would read
Must have his soul awaked to sympathy,
And time must all avenge the cruel deed
That plunged a state in deepest misery;
Or him who fled to gain his liberty:
Alone released must be the youthful wight,
That stole the wand and furrowed o'er the sea:
But of fair Venus in the dawning light
A saint might well grow pale at such a fearful
sight.

II.

Now basking in a shady grove there lay
A goddess fair that from the ancient hill
Inspired the muse of Homer, as they say,
And e'en the bard of fairest Tanaquill,
But now in death she lay all mute and still;
Her lyre by her side was crimson hued;

Ah me! in truth she yielded up her will;
Fair Delphi lay forsaken and it stood
A barren hill within the desert solitude.

III.

And so I close my book of prophecy.
Adieu; and all who hear me turn again
When well once more my harp may loosened be
For with the last note of this dying strain
A sound comes wailing o'er the distant main,
A breath of life that fans our souls instead
Of war that had the millions cruelly slain;
A dove of peace comes cooing o'er my head:
The new world springs to life; the ancient world
is dead.

IV.

Yet sorry is my soul that thus should pass
So many images of life; the light
Comes nevermore from that which winsome
was
In the dark shades of pestilential night,
For carnal was the force of armed might,
That slew our brethren on the bloody field;
Now all is with the spiritual bedight,
And man is taught in sympathy to wield
The sword of love by Him of Calvary revealed.

A VISION OF SPENSER AND IRELAND
(ARLO'S HILL).

Book VII., Canto VI., Faerie Queene.

METHOUGHT I stood on Arlo's hill and saw
Diana with her troop of virgin nymphs,
And Cynthia breathing sweetness on the air,
And all around was nature decked so fair :
I backward cast my mind and snatched a
 glimpse
Of him who stood above all earthly law
Of literary art; and on the hill
I deemed his spirit in the air was dwelling still.

On Arlo's hill aspiring to be great
The poet of the ages stood; his eye
Peered far across the centuries of time,
And well he deemed that from this Island
 clime
Trampled and bruised in war so ruthlessly,
The Oracle of universal state
Would flicker from this taper when relit,
That once in learning fair imperial did sit.

